UNITED
NATIONS

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United Nations
Conference
on Trade and
Development

Distr.
GENERAL

TD/B/COM.1/24
20 July 1999

Original : ENGLISH

TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Commission on Trade in Goods and Services,
and Commodities
Fourth session
Geneva, 20-24 September 1999
Item 2 of the provisional agenda

PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND ANNOTATIONS

I. PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Election of officers

2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

3. Analysis of factors affecting the production and trade of commodities, such as the implications of financial crises, the reasons for and effects of the collapse in commodity prices, and the impact of changing distribution and market structures

4. Analysis of certain service sectors, including analysis of successful experiences in those sectors, particularly those which enhance the export capacity of developing countries (such as professional and business services and access to transport services), including the development implications of electronic commerce

5. Reports of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission

6. Progress report on the implementation of agreed conclusions and recommendations of the Commission

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8. Adoption of the report of the Commission to the Trade and Development Board.

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II. ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Item 1: Election of officers

1. In accordance with rule 18 of the rules of procedure of the main Committees of the Trade and Development Board, the Commission shall elect a Chairman, five Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur from among the representatives of its members, taking into account the need to ensure equitable geographical distribution. Rule 19 of the rules of procedure states that the Bureau of the Commission shall consist of seven members (i.e. four members from Lists A and C combined, two members from List B and one member from List D referred to in the annex to General Assembly resolution 1995 (XIX) as amended).

2. Accordingly, following the cycle of rotation established after UNCTAD IX, the bureau for the fourth session of the Commission shall be as follows: Chairman from List C; Rapporteur from List A; and five Vice-Chairmen (2 from lists A and C combined, 2 from List B and 1 from List D).

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

3. The provisional agenda for the fourth session of the Commission, as reproduced in section I above, was approved by the Commission at its third session on 2 October 1998 (TD/B/45/10, annex I).

4. Concerning the organization of the work of the session, the Commission will have five days available to it. It is suggested that the agenda items be taken up sequentially, with the first plenary meeting on Monday, 20 September, being devoted to procedural matters, introductory statements and the commencement of the discussion under item 3. The last plenary meeting, on Friday, 24 September, would be devoted to the formal action under items 3 - 8.

5. The secretariat will prepare a detailed programme for the session, which will be made available on the first day of the session.

Documentation

TD/B/COM.1/24 Provisional agenda and annotations

Item 3: Analysis of factors affecting the production and trade of commodities, such as the implications of financial crises, the reasons for and effects of the collapse in commodity prices, and the impact of changing distribution and market structures

6. This item will help to examine factors affecting the commodity sector, particularly in developing countries, focusing on those elements which appear to have increased in importance

in recent years. In this respect, it will be possible to discuss both the fundamental changes in the structure and functioning of the world commodity economy, and the dynamics of price movements in the light of financial crises.

7. It will also provide an opportunity to consider possible areas for international cooperation. These areas could include improving the ability of enterprises in commodity-dependent developing countries, in particular LDCs, to function successfully in increasingly complex markets; enhancing market transparency, information flows and analytical capacities; eliminating trade-distorting practices; making the international "playing field" more equitable for smaller and weaker participants; promoting structured commodity finance and the use of price risk management instruments; and measures to promote vertical and horizontal diversification in commodity-dependent developing countries.

Documentation

TD/B/COM.1/27 Report by the UNCTAD secretariat

Item 4: Analysis of certain service sectors, including analysis of successful experiences in those sectors, particularly those which enhance the export capacity of developing countries (such as professional and business services and access to transport services), including the development implications of electronic commerce

8. This item will provide an opportunity to examine successful experiences in service strategies, both in strengthening the domestic services sector and in increasing exports of services. Experiences with liberalization of trade in services and the prerequisite conditions to maximize the development impact of such liberalization will be examined. The effective implementation of export strategies requires an identification of barriers to trade in services, and the negotiations under GATS XIX will provide an opportunity to pursue their elimination. Regional integration agreements among developing countries should be deepened to facilitate exports of services to neighbouring countries. The growth of electronic commerce has provided new challenges and opportunities for developing countries in designing such strategies and penetrating world markets for trade in services, as well as mastering the new negotiating issues that it entails.

Documentation

TD/B/COM.1/28 Report by the UNCTAD secretariat

9. At its third session (TD/B/COM.1/22, para. 22), the Commission requested the secretariat to prepare jointly with WTO an assessment of the impact on developing countries of liberalization under GATS. The Commission also requested the secretariat to prepare, in

cooperation with WTO, a list of economic needs tests in the schedules of specific commitments under GATS. The two studies will be made available to the fourth session as background papers.

Background documentation

UNCTAD/ITCD/TSB/7	Joint assessment of the impact on developing countries of liberalization under GATS
UNCTAD/ITCD/TSB/8	List of economic needs tests in the GATS schedules of specific commitments

Item 5: Reports of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission

10. In accordance with paragraph 114 of "A Partnership for Growth and Development" (TD/378), subsidiary bodies should report technical matters discussed at the expert level to the parent Commission, which may transmit them to the Board as appropriate. The Commission will have before it the reports of the three expert meetings held since its third session. The Commission will consider their findings and discuss the policy implications. In taking note of the reports, the Commission may wish to endorse the agreed conclusions contained therein. The Commission should, when appropriate, make the results of its expert meetings available to other relevant Commissions.

11. In addition under this item, the attention of the Commission will be drawn to the report of the ad hoc expert meeting on applications of structured commodity finance techniques for commodity-dependent countries.

Documentation

TD/B/COM.1/23 TD/B/COM.1/EM.8/3	Report of the Expert Meeting on examining trade in the agricultural sector, with a view to expanding the agricultural exports of developing countries, and to assisting them in better understanding the issues at stake in the upcoming agricultural negotiations
TD/B/COM.1/25 TD/B/COM.1/EM.9/3	Report of the Expert Meeting on Air Transport Services: Clarifying issues to define the elements of the positive agenda of developing countries as regards both the GATS and specific sector negotiations of interest to them
TD/B/COM.1/26	

TD/B/COM.1/EM.10/3	Report of the Expert Meeting on the impact of changing supply-and-demand market structures on commodity prices and exports of major interest to developing countries
UNCTAD/ITCD/COM/MISC.39	Report of the ad hoc expert meeting on applications of structured commodity finance techniques for commodity-dependent countries.

Item 6: Progress report on the implementation of agreed conclusions and recommendations of the Commission

12. In accordance with paragraph 24 of the guidelines on the efficiency and functioning of the UNCTAD intergovernmental machinery, as contained in Trade and Development Board decision 446(EX-16) of 16 February 1998, the secretariat will submit a progress report on the implementation of agreed conclusions and recommendations by the secretariat.

Documentation

TD/B/COM.1/29	Progress report on the implementation of agreed conclusions and recommendations by the secretariat

Item 7: Other business

Item 8: Adoption of the report of the Commission to the Trade and Development Board

13. The report of the Commission on its fourth session will be submitted to the Trade and Development Board for consideration.